

(a) whether it is a fact that the backlog of appeals pending before the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal has been increasing;

(b) if so, the position as on 31 March, 2000;

(c) the steps taken to clear the backlog in 2000-2001;

(d) whether Government have taken any step to reduce the backlog of appeals pending before ITA Tribunal; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No. Sir. The pendency is now going down 2,62,652 cases were pending as on 1.4.2000 as against the pendency of 3,00,597 cases as on 1.4.1999. The pendency has come down further to 2,46,782 as on 1.2.2001. Thus the pendency has come down by 53,815 cases during the above period.

(b) the pendency as on 31.3.2000 was 2,62,652 cases.

(c) to (e) In order to reduce the pendency of appeals, the Government has sanctioned 15 additional Benches, out of which 13 benches have been made functional.

In addition, Single Member Case (SMC) powers have been conferred on all eligible members to enable them to dispose of cases where the assessed income is up to Rs. 5.00 lakhs.

Amendment to the Constitution

440. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to bring forward an amendment to the Constitution to provide for fixed tenure of Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas to ensure good governance in the country; and

(b) if so, by when it is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Cases of Land Acquisition and Compensation

441. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state: